

A
PARAPHRASE
AND
EXPOSITION
of the Propheſie of
SAINT PETER,

Concerning the day of CHRIST'S
ſecond Coming;

Deſcribed in the third Chapter of his
ſecond EPISTLE.

AS ALSO,

How the CONFLAGRATION, or De-
ſtruction of the WORLD by fire, (whereof
Saint Peter ſpeaks) and eſpecially of
the HEAVENS, is to be
underſtood.

BY

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Chriſts Colledge in Cambridg.

The ſecond Edition corrected and amended.

LONDON,

Printed by R. Leighton, for SAMUEL MAN, dwelling at the
ſign of the Swan in Pauls Church-yard. 1650.

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By the Rev. Mr. John
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 Saint Peter speaks) and especially of
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**A P A R A P H R A S E
A N D
E X P O S I T I O N**

**of the Propheſie of
S A I N T P E T E R,**
**Concerning the day of C H R I S T S ſecond
Coming,**

**On the third Chapter of the ſecond
E P I S T L E.**

Verſe 1, 2.

Saint Peter exhorts the believing Jews, unto whom he writes to be mindful of the words of the holy Prophets, (a) If that which St. Peter here deſcribeth were foretold by the old Prophets, then muſt Saint Peter be ſo expounded, as it may be ſhewen in them, and agree with them. (a) Eſay, Daniel, & Malachi, concerning the coming of Chriſt to judgment, & the reſurrection then promiſed, it being alſo confirmed by the Apoſtles of our Lord and Saviour.

Verse. 3, 4.

For howsoever it were then
believed both by Jews & Chri-
stened Gentiles, yet in the last
dayes should come those, who
walking after their own de-
sires (or humours) should deny
and deride the expectation of
any such promise (b) of that
day of Christ, saying, Where is
the promise (c) of his coming?
Where is the new heaven and
new earth you talk of?

(b) This *ἡμετέρας ἡμέρας*,
or last dayes, should seem to
be the time of the Chur-
ches Apostasie under Anti-
christ, according to that of
Saint Paul, 1 Tim. 4. 1. In the
latter times some shall depart
from the faith, giving heed to
spirits of error, & doctrines
of demons. For as the times
of the fourth and last of Da-
niels Kingdoms were the
last times in general, during

which Christ was to come, and found his Church and
Kingdome: So the latter times of the fourth Kingdome,
being the period of a time, times, and halfe a time, where-
in the wicked horne should domineere, are the latemost
times of the last times, or last times in speciall.

(c) I take Promise here for *res promissa*, the antithesis im-
plying that to be the meaning, viz. The scoffers say, Where
is the promise of his coming? Nevertheless we look for a new
heaven, and a new earth, according to his promise. But here is
somewhat, (Reader) in the application wherein thou maist
erre; but be not thou uncharitable in thy censure, nor
thinke that I am. For although the crying down and
condemning the opinion of the Chiliasts, will be found to
be neere upon the beginning of the times of the Antichri-
stian Apostasie; (which I suppose to be called the last
times;) and that the utter burying of that opinion falls
within these times: yet thou must know, first, That there is
not the like reason of the first Authors of crying down a
truth,

truth, and of thoſe, who led by their authority, take it afterwards, without further examination, for an error. Secondly, to ſcoffe, is one thing, and barely not to believe, is another. Thirdly, it is one thing to deny a promiſe ſimply, and another to deny and queſtion the manner thereof: as alſo, to reject a truth ſincerely propounded, and when it is entangled with errors, as that of the later Chriſtiſt may ſeem to have been.

Verſe 4. pars altera.

The reaſon of this their unbelief being, becauſe they imagine, there hath never yet ſince the creation of the world, been any example of ſuch a deſtruction and change enſuing it, as this at the coming of Chriſt ſhould be. For ſince the Fathers ſel aſleep (ſay they) even ſince Adam died, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. Therefore the expectation of any ſuch change of the world, & the ſtate of things therein (as is ſuppoſed) is vain and frivolous, and never to be fulfilled.

nion and tradition of the reſurrection of the world. After this time there appears to have been amongſt the Jews a ſect of the followers of the opinion of this R. Samuel, which at length was greatly advanced by the authority of

Touching the Jews, and the impeachment of this opinion amongſt them in the later times, I find amongſt the Doctors of the Gemara, or gloſſe of their Talmud, (which was finiſhed about 500 years after Chriſt) a tenet of one R. Samuel, *אין משיח בן דוד* That there was to be no difference between the preſent ſtate of the world, and the dayes of Meſſiah, but in regard of the bondage under the kingdoms of the Gentiles onely; thereby oppoſing the more ancient opi-

learned *Maimonides*, who having drunk too deep of the Philosophy of *Aristotle*, (wherein he was admirably skillfull) became a champion against the opinion of the worlds renovation to be in the dayes of *Messiah*; and that upon this ground, *Quod mundus retinet & sequitur consuetudinem suam*; which saying he ascribeth to some other Rabbins of the same opinion before him, which for the sense and meaning is the self same with that here of the scoffers: *All things* (say they) *continue, as they were from the beginning of the creation*. Nevertheless *Aben Ezra*, who lived not long after *Maimonides*, maintained still (as also others did) the contrary; & there are extant certain discourses and tractates amongst them, purposely written of this argument, and confuting the opinion of *Rambam* and his followers; as one called *משיב דבר* *cæli novi*, proving the necessity of the renovation of the world, and directed against *cap. 29. lib. 2. of Maimonides his More Nebachim*. Another by *R. Isaac Abarbinel*, *מלאכה ופועל* *Opera Dei*, (out of *Psal. 66. 5.*) wherein all the arguments brought against the renovation are confuted. And no doubt there are more of the like nature, which we know not of.

Verse 5, 6.

But those who suppose this (נאמר לו) that there hath never yet any such destruction or change befallen the creation, and hence conclude, there is nor shall such ever be; they weigh and consider not the universal deluge in the time of *Noah*, (when the curses laid upon the creature for mans sin

first solemnly tooke place,) brought as a like destruction, so a like change upon the world for the degeneration of the creature, as this at the second coming of Christ shall be for the restoration & renovation of the same in the glorious liberty of the children of God. For the heavens were of old, and the globe of the earth, consisting partly (ἐξ ὑδάτος) of water, viz. that of the great deep; & partly (δι' ὑδάτων) amongst (d) water, to wit, the clouds and flood-gates of heaven hanging about it, all framed by the word of God: By the which waters (δι' ὧν ὑδάτων) the world which then was, being overwhelmed with water, perished; as it is written Gen. 7. 11. seq. in the 600. year of Noahs life, in the second moneth, in the seventeenth day of the month were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, & vers. 18. and the waters; & 21. and all flesh died.

Verse 7.
But the heavens and the earth
(i.e. the world) which is now,

(d) And sometimes signifies *inter*, amongst, or in the midst of, as if it were *in medio*. So Herodotus, *in medio inter insulas*. Howsoever we render the Preposition, I suppose *S. Peter* by his *si uan* means the superiour water, which together with that of the sea, or great deep, concurred to the drowning of the world, as appears by the place of *Gen.* is alleged.

by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire (c) at the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, according to the Propheſie of Daniel, c. 7. who ſaw a fiery ſtream iſſuing and coming forth before the Judge of the world, & the body of the fourth beaſt burned therewith: And of Eſay, c. 66. who ſaith of that day, That the Lord ſhall come with fire, & with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire. And that by fire and by his ſword, (i.e. by his ſword of fire, i.e. by the Lord would plead with all fleſh, and the ſlain of the Lord ſhall be many. So alſo Malachy cap. 4. That the great and terrible day ſhall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, which at the coming of that day (F) ſhall be burnt up.

Verſe 8.

But wheras I mentioned (ſaith Saint Peter) the day of judgment, leſt ye might miſtake it

(e) From this proportion which the judgment to come by fire, hath unto that which was by water in the deluge, Irenæus calls it *Diluvium ignis*, lib. 5. c. 29. *juxta edit. F. Edwardi.*

(f) It may be it is of this day that the Prophet Eſay alſo ſpeaks, cap. 9. 5. where he ſaith, that the battel of the Meſſiah ſhould not be as the battel of the warrior, with
for

for a ſhort day, or a day of few hours, I would not, Beloved, have you ignorant, that one day (g) with the Lord is as a thouſand yeers, & a thouſand yeers as one day.

confused noiſe, and garments rolled in bloud; but with burning and ſuel of fire. For the old Prophets for the moſt part ſpeak of the coming of Chriſt indefinitely and in general, without that diſtinction of firſt and ſecond coming, which the Goſpel out of *Daniel* hath more clearly taught us: And ſo conſequently they ſpake of the things to be at Chriſts coming indefinitely and altogether, which we who are now more fully informed by the Revelation of the Goſpel, of a twofold coming, muſt apply each of them to his proper time: thoſe things which befit the ſtate of his firſt coming, unto it; and ſuch things as befit the ſtate of his ſecond coming, to the ſecond; and what befits both alike, may be applyed unto both.

(g) Thus I expound theſe words by way of pre-occupation or premunition, becauſe they are the formal words of the Jewiſh Doctors, when they ſpeak of the day of judgment, or day of Chriſt, as Saint Peter here doth, viz. *אֶחָד הַיָּמִים כְּאַלְפֵי שָׁנִים una dies Dei ſ. B. ſicut mille anni.* And though they uſe to quote that of the ninth Pſalm, (*mille anni in oculis tuis ut dies heſternus*) for confirmation thereof, yet are not theſe words formally in the Pſalm. So that St. Peter in this paſſage ſeems rather to have had reſpect to that common ſaying of the Jews in this argument, than to the words of the Pſalm; where the words (*one day with the Lord is as a thouſand yeers*) are not, though the latter part of the ſentence (*a thouſand yeers as one day*) may allude thither; as the Jews alſo were wont to bring it, for a confirmation of the former. 2 Theſe words are commonly taken as an argument, why God ſhould not be

thought slack in his promise (which follows in the next verse: But the first Fathers took it otherwise, and besides, it proveth it not: for the question is not, whether the time be long or short in respect of God; but whether it be long or short in respect of us; otherwise not 1000, but 100000 yeers are in the eyes of God no more than one day is to us, and so it would not seem long to God, if the day of judgment should be deferred till then. 3. Let the judicious consider it, whether this passage so prone to be taken in the exposition I have given, yea, and alledged to that purpose, were not some part of a motive to the ze-
*lotical Anti-Chilias*ts (whereof *Eusebius*, whom we trust was none of the least) to be so willing and ready to question the authority of this Epistle, as they did also at the same time of the *Apocalyps*. The pretence against this Epistle was, that it wanted the testimonie of allegation by the first Fathers. But (*Dies Domini sicut mille anni*) quoted both by *Iustin Martyr* and *Irenaeus*, is not out of the ninth Psalm, as they took for granted, (for there are no such words, but out of the Epistle of *Peter*, who applyeth it to the day of judgment, which he calleth *Dies Domini*, *ἐπιστολὰς Πέτρου*: Consider it.

Verse 9.

And though this day be deferred, yet is the Lord not slack concerning his promise, (as some men account slackness, as if he had alter'd his purpose, or meant never to performe it) but the cause of this delay, is his long suffering (a) towards us of the seed of *Israel*, not wil-

(a) *Saint Peter* speaks and writes in this Epistle to his
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ling that any ſhould periſh at that day, but that the whole nation ſhould come unto repentance, (b) which, if that day ſhould ſurprize them in their unbelief, muſt inevitably periſh with the reſt of the enemies of Chriſt.

brethren the Jewes, as appears by the firſt verſe of this chapter.

(b) So the ſame Saint Peter in his firſt publick Sermon to his Nation in the Temple, after the ſending of the holy Ghoſt (Act. 3. 19, &c.) exhorts them to repent and

be converted *ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ αὐτῇ*, for the waſhing away of their ſins, that ſo (*ὅταν αὖ*) thoſe times of reſreſhing and reſtitution of all things which God had ſpoken by the mouth of al his holy Prophets, might come, which till then were to be ſuſpended.

Object. But God could have haſtened the Jewes conversion, if it had pleaſed him.

Reſp. But it ſtood with the oeconomy of Gods juſtice, when the Jewes had rejected Chriſt, their expiation, to grant them this grace, until they ſhould have fulfilled a time of penance for all the ſins of their Nation, even from the firſt time they were a people, until the laſt deſtruction of Jeruſalem. For ſince they would none of their pardon and attonement by Chriſt, (with reſpect unto whoſe coming God had ſo long ſpared them; for all their expiation by ſacrifice looked unto him) God would not bate them an ace of the judgment they had merited, but would viſit all the former ſins of their Nation upon them, from the golden Calf, until their crucifying, and finally, rejecting of their Meſſiah.

Verſe 10.

But as for the manner of the coming of this great day of

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the Lord, it shall be suddenly and unawares, as a thief in the night, in which the heavens (c) with a crackling noise of fire shall pass away, & the *στρατα* (c) or host of them shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works thereof shall be burned.

(c) What these Heavens are, and why I render *στρατα* the host of them; and how this conflagration is to be understood, I will shew when I have done my Paraphrase.

Verf. 11, 12. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, to make our selves fire-proof, and such as may abide the day of refining? as namely becometh those who by faith look for, and hasten the coming of the day of the Lord, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved; and the host of them melt with fervent heat. For our life & conversation ought to be suitable to our faith, and we are so to walk, as if that were always present which by faith we look for.

Verf. 13. But this conflagration ended, (whatsoever those scoffers say, who question the promise of Christs second coming) we look according to his promise Isa. 65. & 66. for a new heaven and a new earth, (that is, a new and refined state of the world) wherein righteousness shall dwell, according as the same Prophet saith, cap. 60. 20, 21. The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, & the dayes of thy mourning shall be ended, thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land, or earth, for ever.

Verf. 14, 15, 16. Wherefore beloved (seeing that ye look for such things at his coming) be diligent that

that ye may be found in him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſs, & account the long-ſuffering of God, in the delay thereof to be ſalvation. Even as our beloved brother Paul alſo (one of the Apoſtles of our Lord, who confirmeth theſe words of the holy Prophets) according to the wiſdom given unto him, hath written unto you, enforcing the like exhortation unto holinneſſe of life, from this our faith and experience of the Lord Jeſus his appearing to judgment, which we now make unto you: viz. Heb. 12. 14, 28, 29. As alſo in all his Epiſtles, ſpeaking in them of theſe things, viz. Rom. 2. 4. coll. com. verſ. 5, 6, 7. & 1 Cor. 1. 7, 8. & 3. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11. in initio, & 7. 1. Phil. 1. 10. & 2. 15, 16. & cap. 3. 10. Colloſſ. 3. 4, 5. 1 Theſſ. 2. 12. & 3. 13. denique 5. 23. 2 Theſſ. 1. 8, 11. 1 Tim. 6. 14, 15. Tit. 2. 12. 13.

How this Conflagration of the world

whereof Saint PETER ſpeaks, and eſpecially of the Heavens, is to be underſtood.

FOR reſolution of this queſtion, I muſt premiſe ſome things, to make the way thereto the more eaſie.

R. 1. That the old Hebrew language wherein the Scripture ſpeaks, there is no one word to expreſſe the compages of the ſuperiour and inferiour bodies, which we call *Mundus*, but theſe two words *Heaven* and *Earth* (שמים וארץ) joyned together, and

and put together, onely so that when Saint Peter saith (the World that then was, perished by waters; but the Heavens and Earth that are now, are reserved to fire:) He might as well have said according to his meaning, The Heavens and the Earth which then were, perished by waters, as the World that now is shall by fire. For the words *Heaven* and *Earth* joyned, imply no more in the one (according to the Scriptures notion) than the single word *Mundus* or *World* doth in the other, being applyed to the history of the great deluge: as also, a *New heaven* and a *New earth* is the same notion with that in our expression, where we say a *New World*; that is to say, *Nova rerum facies, novarum conditio*; which we otherwhile apply to very small, and even particular and domestical changes, when we say, Here is a new World; which the Hebrew would or might express, Here is a new Heaven and a new Earth.

2 That it is not like that any other World, or Heaven and Earth, shall perish by fire, than such a one as heretofore perished by water: for so the *Antithesis* importeth, *viz.* The World, or Heaven and Earth that then was, perished by water, the Heaven and earth which now is, is reserved for a destruction by fire. Now the World which perished by water was no other than the sublunary World; the Heaven whereof is that which we call Aire, but the Scripture Heaven, which sublunary heaven, together with the earth, was marred by that general deluge; and the creatures belonging to them both either wholly destroyed, or
marvel-

marvellouſly corrupted from that they were before: ſuch a World therefore, and no other Heaven and earth, ſhall undergo the ſecond deluge of fire for reſtauration, which before ſuffered the deluge of water for corruption.

13 Obſerve alſo, for the better underſtanding of Saint Peters meaning, That the word *σῴζω* which we in this place are wont to turn Elements, is not like to be underſtood in the notion of the Greek Doctors, whoſe terms and notions the Scripture uſeth not; but otherwiſe divideth the World. May further, in this place it cannot be ſo underſtood, for that the Hebrew diviſion of the World into Heaven and Earth is here expreſſed, and the *σῴζω* diſtinguiſhed from them both. But when the whole world is divided into Heaven and Earth *ἀέρας καὶ γῆς καὶ ὕδατος*, by Earth is meant the Earthen Globe, which Saint Peter ſaith is *ἡ γῆ* *συνέκτισται*, and ſo the water and earth are both included in the ſole name of Earth: In Heaven the Aire is included. Thus three of the Phyſical Elements are beſtowed. The fourth is the Fire: but this is that which is to burn the *σῴζω*, and ſo none of the *σῴζω* to be burnt. And if any of theſe Elements could be exempted from this diviſion into Heaven and Earth, beſides the Fire, viz. the Aire, yet could not that, nor any of them alone be *σῴζω* in Saint Peter: For *σῴζω* notes more than one. It muſt needs therefore be, that *σῴζω* here meaneth ſomething elſe. Let us ſee if we can find out what it is. Mark then Saint Peters order, *ἀβύσσος καὶ σῴζω* then *γῆ καὶ ὕδατος* By

By which correspondence it should seeme that *סוּחָא* should be some furniture belonging to *cælum*, as *מִן הָעֵצִים* are the buildings & whole furniture of *creatures* belonging to *terra*; which furniture of both, but especially that of the *Heaven* the Scripture calls *סוּחָא* the host of them; Gen. 2. 1. *The heavens & the earth were finished, סוּחָא וְכָל הָאָרֶץ* and all the host of them. LXX. *ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ*. Vulg. *Ornatus eorum*. Nay, seeing the whole world is nothing else but the *heaven* and the *earth*, and what is contained in them, (i.e.) *exercitus eorum*: and seeing *heaven* and *earth* are both here distinctly named, and *מִן הָעֵצִים* put for the host of the *earth*; it must needs be that *סוּחָא*, named as distinct things from all three, should note the host of *heaven*. And so the meaning of Saint Peter should be, when he saith *ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ σὺν ἑαυτοῖς*, as if he had said, *ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ σὺν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ ἡ γῆ*, the *heavens* and the *host thereof*; or *τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ σὺν ἑαυτοῖς*, as he says, *γῆ καὶ ἡ ἐν αὐτῇ ἑρπῆς*; the *earth* and the *works therein*. But how, will some man say, should *σὺν ἑαυτοῖς* come to have this notion? I answer thus, The Hebrew verb *סוּחָא* signifieth, *in ordine militari sto, incedo*, and so answers to the Greek verb *σὺν ἑαυτοῖς*, which is expounded, *ἐν τάξει ὁρμήσας*, i.e. *in ordine militari incedo*, *Vide Scap. ex Etymolog.* Accordingly the LXX. render the Hebrew *סוּחָא* *ὁρμήσας*, i.e. *in præcinctu sto, instructa acie sto*. Now if the verb *סוּחָא* signifie the same with the Greek *σὺν ἑαυτοῖς*, why may not the Hebrew Noun *סוּחָא* (which we turn *exercitus*) be rendered *σὺν ἑαυτοῖς*; the Hellenists or Greekish Jews, as in other words so here following the Etymo-

Etymology from $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\alpha$, & having eye more to their own native language, than to the uſe of Greeke. It would be long to ſhew in how many words they, and the Greek Scriptures written according to their Dialect, uſe notions w^h the Greek uſed not, (*viz.*) reſpecting ſome conformity or other in their own tongue. The works of the learned in ſacred Criticiſme are of late full of ſuch obſervations, whereby many difficulties and obſcurities in Scripture become clear and eaſie. Nevertheleſs the Gentile-Greeks themſelves uſe $\tau\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\varsigma$ and $\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ (which come of the ſame verbe $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\alpha$) in the ſame ſenſe we plead for, *viz.* for *ordo militaris*, Military array; why may not then the *Helleniſts* (ſo the **Greek Fathers* are called) do ſo with $\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, being for the etymology every way as fit, ſeeing alſo they are otherwiſe wont to permute ſignifications from vicinity of ſound.

* See th^e Syriack Aſt. 9. 20. where ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΑΙ are turned *Judei qui loquebantur Græce.*

For a further confirmation of this notion of $\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ I contend for, I will adde what I have met with to that purpoſe. *Schickardus*, a learned Profeſſor of the Oriental languages, at *Tubingen*, in his *Bekinath happeruſhim*, pag. 44. hath diſcovered out of *Rambans*, or *R. Moſes ben Nûchmans* Preface in *Peruſchebataroth*, two paſſages taken out of the Chaldee copy of the *Wiſdom of Solomon*, which that *Rabbi* had ſeen: whereby the ſaid *Schickard* proveth againſt *St. Jerome*, that the Greek is not the Original, but was tranſlated out of Chaldee. The paſſages which this *Ramban* quoteth thence are cap. 7. 3, 6, 7. and part of the 8. And again, verſ. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. In the laſt of which quotations, becauſe there is in the Greek $\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\alpha\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, I greedily looked what word in the Caldee answered here to $\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, which I found to be מַלְאָכִים , which thoſe who have ſkill know to ſignifie the Planets, 12. ſignes or conſtellations of Heaven, as being the ſame with the Hebrew מַלְאָכִים . $\Sigma\tau\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ therefore here are Stars and Planets,

* have ſince looked in the Preface of

Ramban, where
I found those
Chaldee pas-
sages mentio-
ned, which the
Rabbin tran-
slateth into he-
brew, and for
the Chaldee
which answereth to
ἐνέγειαν
ἀποχέαν
he renders
משמ
מלמ

which I shall not need prove to be the host of the Ethereall Heaven: yea, and perhaps too, רָמָה and מְרָמָה are derived of the verb בִּרָא, *ire*, as מְרָמָה is of מִרָא. Now we know the Scriptures make mention of three Heavens; first, the Aire or sublunary Heaven: secondly, the Ethereall and starry Heaven: thirdly, the Heaven of Glory, or Empe-reall Heaven. Every of these Heavens have their host or army: the host of the heaven of glory, or the third, are the Angels and blessed Spirits: the host of the Ethereall heavens are the Stars and Planets: the host of the Aereal, or sublunary heaven, are either visible, as the clouds of heaven, נִפְלֵאוֹת בְּהַיְוָה, and other meteors, as also the rest of the creatures mansioning therein, as the fowles of the heaven, נִפְלֵאוֹת בְּהַיְוָה or invisible, viz. the wicked Spirits and Devils, whose Prince Satan, is called *the Prince of the power of the Aire*, Eph. 2. 2. and his host κορυφαίους, *rulers of the world*, i. e. the sublunary world, and τα πνευματικά τῶν ἀνομῶν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, *wicked spirits in heavenly places*, viz. in the lowest or sublunary heavens, Eph. 6. 12. And whether S. Paul, Gal. 4. 8, 9 and Col. 2. 8, &c. includes not some of those under his οὐρανὸν τοῦ αἵματος, I cannot affirm: let the learned further consider it, when namely he speaks to Gentiles, and of Gentiles, and not Jewes.

Having hitherto prepar'd the way, let us now come closer home to S. Peter, whose words evidently import, that some of these heavens, or at of them, shall suffer a conflagration at the day of Christ. Not all of them, for, who ever put the Emphyreal heaven into that reckoning: And for the Ethereall heaven, he that considereth the supereminent nature and immensity thereof, and of those innumerable bodies therein, in regard of which the whole sublunary world is but a point or center, & that it no way can be proved that ever those bodies received any curse for mans sin, or contagion by the worlds deluge, or that any enemies of God dwell

dwell in them to pollute them: he that conſidereth this wil not eaſily be induced to believe that the fire of the day of judgement ſhould burn them. It remaineth therefore that the ſublunary heavens only, with their *συχνα* are to be the ſubject of this conflagration.

Theſe *heavens* (ſaith S. Peter) *λυθιςονται*, i. e. *ſolventur*, and their *συχνα* ſhall melt with fervent heat: It is a Metaphor taken from the refining of mettals, *qua igne ſolventur ut purificentur*: ſo that *ἐν πυρὶ πυρὶ μὲν ὀδοῦνται*, is as much as *Cæli igne adhibito conflagrabitur*. This to be the meaning of *λυθιςονται* appears, becauſe S. Peter himſelf interprets *ſolvitur* to be *liqueſcitur*. For having in the tenth verſe ſaid *συχνα λυθιςονται*, (i. e.) *ſolventur*, he in the twelfth verſe repeating it ſayes, *συχνα τήνουςται*, (i. e.) *liqueſcent*; Now *melting* is for refining and purifying. Nor is the word *πυρὶ μὲν* averſe from this notion, the LXX. uſing *πυρὶ* for the Hebrew *אש* as in the Pſalms more than once: *The words of the Lord are as refined ſilver*, LXX. *ἀργύριον πεπυρωμένον*, *Pſal. 12.* and ſo elſewhere. But when the ſublunary heaven ſhall be thus refined, even the Ethereal lights of the Stars, of the Sun and Moon, &c. will appear to thoſe on earth much more glorious than now they do, as ſending their rayes through a purer *Medium*; ſo that all the world to us-ward ſhall be as it were renewed.

As for *παριςονται* (or *paſſing away*) verſe 10. it is an Hebraiſme, ſignifying any change, or going of a thing from the ſtate wherein it was, and answers to the verbe *אש*, which ſignifieth both *transire* and *permutari*, as *אש* in Chaldianisme doth. And *Sabindler* notes that *Pſal. 102.* the Arabick for *אש* *mutabuntur*, hath *يَتَغَيَّرُونَ* *transibunt*. In the twelfth verſe it is expounded by *λυθιςονται*, but *λυθιςονται* I have already ſhewed is commuted with *τμήν σιγῆς*; they therefore all three of them ſignifie one

and the same thing; and I see no reason why we should imagine a greater *emphasis* in παρελεύσεται for an utter abolition in the destruction by fire, than is before implied in ἀπόλωτος when he spake of the destruction by water: τότε κόσμος (inquit) ὁ σατικατοκλήσει ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

But what shall become of the invisible host, which I named as part of the στρατὸς of this sublunary heaven, viz. those πνευματικά τῆς πονηρίας, the army of wicked and unclean spirits: shall the fire of the last judgement touch these? I answer: Though the operation of the fire shall not be upon them to burn them, yet shall they also suffer by this fiery judgement, being thereby to be exiled and dejected from those high mansions, and bestowed in some lower place: for so that of *Jude* seemeth to imply, *The Angels* (saith he) *which kept not their first estate, but left their own* (or proper) *habitation, he hath reserved to* (be bound with) *everlasting chaines of darkness, at the judgement of the great day.* Vide Piscat. in hunc locum.

And this seemes to me to be the most literal and unforced exposition of this description of Saint Peter, of the heaven and earths conflagration at the day of Christ, and so to be preferred before any other.

But if a *Prophetical* strain or scheme may here be admitted, there is another way of explication, which yet in the conclusion will come to the same purpose the former did, although the way thereto be not the same. And certainly our Saviour in the Gospel describing the coming of this day, useth a *Prophetical* expression: *The Sunne* (saith he) *shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the Stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* For if this be taken literally, whither shall the stars fall from heaven, which are either as big, or many times bigger than the globe of the earth, where shall be

room

room for them: if ſuch a ſcheme there be ſuppos'd in St. Peters deſcription, th'explication may be after this manner.

Mundus, or the *World*, (to omit other particular exceptions) is according to the Scriptures uſe, either *Mundus continens*, or *Mundus contentus*, (give me leave to uſe thoſe termes for diſtinction ſake:) By *Mundus continens* I mean the compages and frame of the *Physical heaven & earth*, wherein the reſt of the creatures are contained: By *Mundus contentus*, the ſtate or body of the inhabitants or Kingdoms of the earth. Now to whatſoever the notion of *Mundus* is applicable, there is alſo ſuppoſed to be an heaven and earth, as being the names and parts whereby the Scriptures expreſs the *World*. The *heaven* then of this *Political world* is the ſovereignty or ſovereign part thereof, whoſe hoſt and ſtars are the powers ruling in the *World*: In the higheſt place *Gods* and *Idols*; next, *Kings*, *Princes*, *Peers*, *Counſellours*, *Magiſtrates*, and other ſuch lights ſhining in the Firmament. And at ſuch a meaning and no other (it being an Oriental notion) may aime (for ought I can ſee) that ſuppoſed ſaſtuous ſtyle of *Sapores* King of *Persia* to *Constantius* the Emperour; *Rex Regum Sapores, frater ſolis & luna, particeps (i.e. ſocius) ſyderum, Conſtantio fratri ſalutem*. But to go on: *Earth* is the *Pezantry* or *vulgus hominum*, together with the terreſtrial creatures ſerving the uſe of man: Of ſuch an Heaven, as this is, the Lord ſpeaketh in the Propheſie of *Haggai*, cap. 2. v. 6. *Yet once it is a little while, and I will ſhake all Nations, and the deſire of all Nations ſhall come.* And again v. 21. *I will ſhake the heavens and the earth, and I will overthrow the throne of Kingdoms, and I will deſtroy the ſtrength of the Kingdoms of the Heathen, &c.* Of ſuch an heaven and earth ſpeaketh *Jeremy*, c. 4. v. 23. *I beheld the earth, and it was without form and void, (תהו ובהו) and the heavens, & they had no light: viz. as if the World were turn'd into the old Chaos again, Gen. cap. 1. See the reſt.*

rest which followeth. Of such Heavens & Earth speaketh the Lord in *Esay*, cap. 51. v. 15, 16. namely, of the Heavens and Earth of the World, or state of Israel. *I am* (saith he) *the Lord thy God, who divided the sea,* (to wit, the Red sea) *when the waters thereof roared, the Lord of Hosts in his name: And put my Word* (i. e. my Law) *in thy mouth, and covered thee in the shadow of my hand,* (i. e. protected thee in thy march to Canaan) *that I might plant the Heavens, and lay the foundations of the Earth,* (i. e. make thee a State, and build thee into a Political World) *and say unto Sion, thou art my people.* Of such a kind of Heaven speaks the same Prophet, cap. 34. v. 2, 4, 5. *The indignation of the Lord is upon all Nations, and his fury upon all their Armies, &c. And all the Host of Heaven shall be dissolved, and the Heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the Vine, and as a falling figge from the figge-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in Heaven: Behold it shall come down on Idumea, &c.* See the rest, & know that this destruction of Edom is prophesied of in no lesse hyperbolical a strain by *Obadiah*, and *Jeremy* cap. 49. from v. 7. to 22. *Ezek.* 35. v. 4. & 25. 12. which I note, lest any man wondering at the hyperbole of this of *Esay*, should think it appliable only to the day of judgement. And that such schemes as these were usual to the Nations of the Orient, may appear not only by the Chymical Philosophy derived thence, (which makes heaven & earth & stars in every thing) but from the testimony of *Moses Maimonides*, who (*more Nebochim part. 2. cap. 29.*) affirms that the Arabians in his time in their vulgar speech, when they would express that a man was fallen into some great calamity or adversity, used to say, *Calum ejus super terram ejus occidit*: Compare *Lament.* 2. 1. No question these schemes were as familiar to them, as our Poets strains and expressions are to us, though of another genius: Ours are borrowed from fables, stories,

ſtories, places; theirs, more from the frame of the World, the Sunne, Moon, Stars, and Elements, &c.

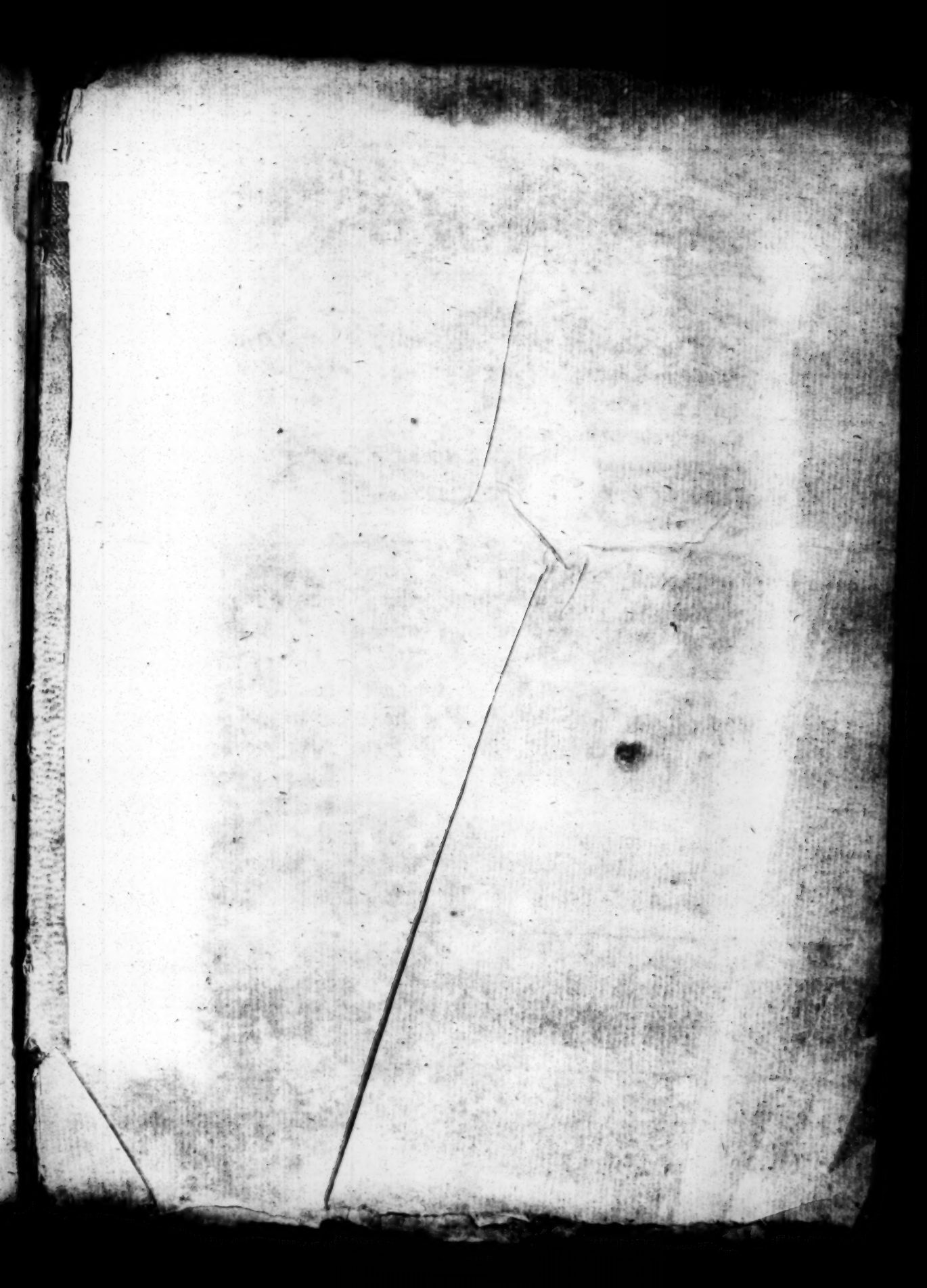
If ſuch a notion of *Cælum* and *Terra* may have place in this place of *Peter*, (and why may he not uttering a Propheſie borrow a Poetical ſtrain?) it may eaſily appear what Heaven and Earth the fire at Chriſts ſecond coming ſhall burn up and conſume, *viz.* the heaven and the earth of the contained world, ſuch as thoſe which the former judgement by water over-whelmed and deſtroyed; the World of wicked ſtates and men, high ones & low ones, princes and peſants, man & beaſt; according to that twice repeated paſſage, *Eſay* 2. 11, 17. (which the ancient Jewes interpreted of the day of judgement) *The loftyneſſe of man ſhall be bowed down, & the haughtineſſe of men ſhall be made low, & the Lord alone ſhall be exalted that day: And the Idols* (theſe are part of the hoſt of heaven we ſee the Apoſtolic ſpeak of) *ſhall utterly abolish.* And of ſuch of the latter times heavens and *ſpiritu* as theſe, it mattereth not though we underſtand an abſolute deſtruction (*viz.* of ſo much as ſhall be burned) as was in the deluge of *Noah*. And ſo likewiſe of the earth and works thereof. But whereas by the univerſal deluge, though only the *Mundus contentus* periſhed, yet notwithstanding the *Mundus continens* was therewith corrupted and depraved: In the deſtruction of fire it ſhall be otherwiſe; for the world of wicked ones being deſtroyed, the Heaven and the Earth which contained them ſhall be purged and refined, for the righteous to dwell therein. This Expoſition I put but in the ſecond place, becauſe where the proper ſenſe of the letter may be kept, I prefer it before any other.

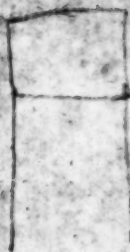
To conclude, if any there yet be, whom neither of the former expoſitions can ſatiſfie, but will needs have the fire and burning here ſpoken of, to be that wherby the World is to be utterly annihilated; I could answer, that the day of

of judgement is a thousand yeers; and this fire, though it be to be *ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, *in that day*, yet shall it not be in the beginning, but end thereof; the beginning being but a destruction of the enemies of Christ, and the Kingdome of Satan, and then a restauration: The end, a destruction of the whole creature it self by utter annihilation; and then *St. Peters* words, ver. 13. to be construed after this manner, *That howsoever the Heavens and the Earth shall at length be dissolved by fire, neverthelesse before that shall be, we look for a new Heaven and a new Earth* (i. e. a new World or restauration) *to precede this abolition, according to his promise, Esay, 65. & 66.*

But such an exposition, methinks, would not suit so wel with that which I take to be *St. Peters* chiefeft scope in this passage; nor with the words of the holy Prophets he pointeth at, which seem to speak only of such a fire, which should precede a restauration, and not of that which should cause an utter abolition of the World: And as concerning such an utter abolition of the whole frame of Heaven and Earth, after the Oeconomy of the Redemption & victory of Christ shall be finished, it seemeth to me a mystery which hath no bottome. Howsoever, I am not perswaded this place of *St. Peter* should mean any such thing. Those passages, *Job* 14. 12. *Psal.* 102. 26. and *Apoc.* 20. 11. may seem to be of more moment. And if any such annihilation shall be, it stands more with reason it should be by the immediate power of God, without the instrument of any creature, than by fire; and that he who at first brought it out of nothing without any creatures help, should reduce it to nothing again without the help of any creature.

Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ τῷ παντοκράτορι.





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